(b) if so, the details thereof and by when these are likely to be lifted; and

(c) if not, whether these issues are likely to be raised during the forthcoming President Clinton's India visit for the sake of qulitative improvment in Indo-US relations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) In partial exercise of the waiver authority under the Defence Appropriations Act 2000, the US lifted restrictions on 27th October 1999, on US EXIM Bank, OPIC and TDA activities; International Military Education and Training Programme (IMET); the lending by US Banks to the Government of India; credit and financial assistance by Department of Agriculture to support the purchase of food; and, certain assistance for Wild Life Conservation and Environmental Projects On 15th December, the US also announced removal of 51 organisations from the list of over 200 Indian Government organisations, research institutions, public sector units and private companies — the so called the Entities List published in November 1998 — which were subjected to tighter export restrictions.

The US continues to maintain restrictions with regard to nonhumanitarian lending by International Financial Institutions and on export of defence-related and dual use goods and technology.

The US has not indicated the time frame for lifting the remaining restrictions.

(c) Both sides agree that the forthcoming visit of President Clinton to India provides an opportunity to pave the way for a qualitatively new and closer relationship. The two sides will discuss all issues of mutual concerns, including US restrictions against India. It has been Government's consistent view that all unilateral restrictions against India are counter-productive and should be completely lifted.

**Pending applications for passports**

1564. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1566 given in the Rajya Sabha on 16th December, 1999 and state:

(a) the position with regard to the issue of passport and the number of applications in every passport office pending at present; and

(b) the details of the steps taken to clear these applications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Passports are normally issued within five weeks provided the application is accurately filled with all the required documents and the clear Police Verification Report has been received. A statement showing the number of pending applications as on 25th February, 2000 is enclosed. (*See* below).

(b) A special drive to clear pending cases of applications made up to 15 November 1999 was successfully implemented in November and December last year. Passport adalats are periodically held by the Regional Passport Offices to clear pending cases. The State police authorities have also been requested to expedite police verification reports.

**Statement**

*Applications pending* with Passport Offices as on 25 February, 2000*

| Sl. No. | Name of Regional Passport Offices | Pending cases | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Police report awaited | Pending with Passport Office |
| 1. | Ahmedabad | 1812 | 736 |
| 2. | Bangalore | — | — |
| 3. | Bareilly | 1560 | 834 |
| 4. | Bhopal | 449 | — |
| 5. | Bhuvaneshwar | — | — |
| 6. | Calcutta | 1784 | 540 |
| 7. | Chandigarh | 9162 | 325 |
| 8. | Chennai | — | — |
| 9. | Cochin | — | — |
| 10. | Delhi | 4065 | 678 |
| 11. | Ghaziabad | 4131 | — |
| 12. | Guwahati | 670 | 38 |
| 13. | Hyderabad | — | — |

* An Application is considered pending only when it is accurately completed without any objection and where a police clearance has been received but on which a passport has not been issued by a Passport Office within five weeks of the application being filed.

| Sl. No. | Name of Regional Passport Offices | Pending cases | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Police report awaited | Pending with Passport Office |
| 14. | Jaipur | 380 | 67 |
| 15. | Jallandhar | 2622 | — |
| 16. | Jammu | — | — |
| 17. | Kozhikode | — | 283 |
| 18. | Lucknow | 1519 | 192 |
| 19. | Mumbai | 1334 | 415 |
| 20. | Nagpur | — | — |
| 21. | Panaji | — | — |
| 22. | Patna | 150 | — |
| 23. | Pune | 4761 | — |
| 24. | Srinagar | 3107 | 69 |
| 25. | Thane | 7334 | 415 |
| 26. | Trichy | 500 | 88 |
| 27. | Trivandrum | 3 | 29 |
| 28. | Vishaka'nam | 25 | 2 |

**China's support to Pakistan**

1565. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China has pledged support to the Pakistan's Military regime declaring that she could continue to faster comprehensive partnership with Islamabad;

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government expect a set back in Sino-Indian relations and if so, steps proposed to counteract the set back; and

(d) what further steps Government could take to improve the India's image in the diplomatic world *vis-a-vis* Pakistan's new regime and its anti-Indian stand?